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PAGE 01 PARIS 03477 041819Z

63

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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARIS 03477

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PDEV, PINT, US, FR
SUBJECT: CONFERENCE ON PUERTO RICAN "INDEPENDENCE"

1. ON JANUARY 28 AND 29 A SEMINAR WAS HELD IN THE MEDICIS ROOM OF THE FRENCH SENATE ON THE SUBJECT OF PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE. PRESIDING WAS SERGE BOUCHENY, A COMMUNIST SENATOR FROM PARIS. OTHER FRENCH POLITICAL AND INTELLECTUAL PERSONALITIES PRESENT WERE GEORGES FOURNIAL, A MEMBER OF THE EXTERNAL POLITICAL SECTION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY; LIONEL JOSPIN, NATIONAL SECRETARY OF THE SOCIALIST PARTY, AND BERNARD CASSEN, DIRECTOR OF THE ANGLO AMERICAN SECTION OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS-VIII. THE PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT WAS REPRESENTED BY JUAN MARI BIAS, SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE PUERTO RICAN SOCIALISTS, REUBEN BERRIOS MARTINOS, PRESIDENT OF THE PUERTO RICAN INDEPENDENCE PARTY AND PEDRO ALBIZU MENESES, SON OF PEDRO ALBIZU CAMPOS, THE PUERTO RICAN MILITANT WHO DIED IN 1965. PHILIP AGEE, THE FORMER CIA OFFICER, ALSO PARTICIPATED IN THE DISCUSSIONS.

2. ORGANIZED UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE ENGLISH/AMERICAN DEPARTMENT AND THE SPANISH DEPARTMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS-VIII (VINCENNES), THE CONFERENCE

PAGE 02 PARIS 03477 041819Z

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ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
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WENT INTO EVERY ASPECT OF PUERTO RICAN LIFE TODAY. CLAIMING THAT THE ASSOCIATION OF PUERTO RICO WITH THE UNITED STATES IS A "JURIDICAL FICTION," THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS WENT ON TO CONDEMN THE ALLEGED EXPLOITATION OF PUERTO RICO BY CONTINENTAL U.S.. THEY CLAIMED THERE IS 30 UNEMPLOYMENT ON THE ISLAND, WHICH IS ALSO THE RECEPTACLE OF HIGHLY POLLUTED INDUSTRIES THAT HAVE DIFFICULTY IMPLANTING THEMSELVES IN THE UNITED STATES. IN ADDITION, THEY CLAIMED THAT 10 OF THE ISLAND'S ARABLE LAND IS OCCUPIED BY MILITARY BASES. PUERTO RICO WAS A "JUMPING-OFF POINT FOR AGGRESSIONS PERPETRATED IN 1961 AGAINST CUBA AND IN 1965 AGAINST THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC." THE UNITED STATES WAS ACCUSED OF CULTURAL DOMINATION AND POLITICAL COLONIALIZATION. IN CONCLUSION THE CONFERENCE RECALLED THAT FRANCE HAD BEEN HOST TO THE 19TH CENTURY PUERTO RICAN PATRIOT, RAYMOND EMETERIO BETANCES, BUT THAT FRANCE HAD VOTED AGAINST INDEPENDENCE FOR PUERTO RICO IN THE DECEMBER 1974 UNITED NATION'S VOTE ON THAT SUBJECT.

3. PRESS COVERAGE OF THE CONFERENCE WAS SLIGHT. LE MONDE HAD TWO BRIEF ARTICLES AND THE COMMUNIST DAILY HUMANITE, HAD ONE SHORT ARTICLE, FIVE DAYS FOLLOWING THE CONFERENCE. BOTH TREATMENTS, WERE NOTABLY BIASED IN FAVOR OF THE CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS.

4. COMMENT: THE CONFERENCE ON PUERTO RICO IN EFFECT AMOUNTED TO A MUTUAL ADMIRATION SOCIETY. ORIGINALLY SCHEDULED TO BE HELD AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PARIS-VIII, IT WAS MOVED AT THE LAST MINUTE TO THE SALLE MEDICIS IN THE SENATE AT THE REQUEST OF SENATOR BOUCHENY. IN FACT, THE SALLE MEDICIS IS AT THE DISPOSITION OF ANY SENATOR WHO SO REQUESTS ITS USE FOR WHATEVER PURPOSE WITHIN REASON HE MAY DESIRE. THE SENATE ITSELF LENDS NO OFFICIAL APPROVAL, NOR HAS IT OFFICIAL CONNECTION WITH THE EVENTS THAT TAKE PLACE IN THE SALLE MEDICIS. NO SENATE REPORT WAS PRODUCED OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THIS PUERTO RICAN CONFERENCE.
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